

These qualities are not uncommon among the men and women who serve in our nation's Armed Forces, but it's not every day that you can point to someone who has lived up to these standards over a career that spans nearly seven decades. I am pleased to recognize a man who has done just that, John Bruce of Troy, Michigan.

Mr. Bruce served in the South Pacific during World War II as a member of the Army Signal Corps. After being honorably discharged following the war, he began a career at the Detroit Arsenal in 1946 as a cost/price analyst. Mr. Bruce has been with TACOM ever since, accepting greater and greater responsibilities. He has served as Chief of Payroll, Chief of Financial Accounting, Deputy Comptroller, and Chief of the Detroit Arsenal Procurement Office, to name only a few of the positions he has held over the years.

Mr. Bruce has been honored on many occasions for his service. His awards include the Secretary of the Army Award for outstanding achievement in material acquisition; the Commanders Award for exceptional Civilian Service, the Meritorious Civilian Service Award, the Achievement Medal for Superior Civilian Service, the Superior Civilian Service Award, the Commander's Award for Civilian Service, and the Department of the Army Decoration for Exceptional Service.

Mr. Bruce is a graduate of UCLA, where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration. He and his late wife, Jean, have two daughters, Nancy and Barbara.

When John Bruce retires on his 94th birthday on December 3, he will be TACOM's and the Army's longest serving employee. I ask the House of Representatives to join me in expressing our gratitude to Mr. Bruce for his many years of service to the nation. Congratulations for a remarkable career and a job well done.

LETTER TO NOAA ADMINISTRATOR JANE LUBCHENCO REGARDING HER INACCURATE AND UNCONSTRUCTIVE PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS LEGISLATION

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, I submit a letter that I have sent to National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration administrator Jane Lubchenco in response to inaccurate and unconstructive remarks about the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations Subcommittee recommended funding for the Joint Polar Satellite System.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

October 26, 2011.

Dr. JANE LUBCHENCO,
Undersecretary for Oceans and Atmosphere,
Department of Commerce, Washington, DC.

DEAR DR. LUBCHENCO: I was disappointed by your recent remarks to the Guardian newspaper accusing congressional Republicans of endangering the Joint Polar Satellite System (JPSS). I want you to know that your reported accusations were neither accurate nor constructive.

According to the article, "Republican budget-cutting measures would knock out

that critical capacity by delaying the launch of the next generation polar-orbiting satellites," said Jane Lubchenco." You are also quoted as saying, "It is a disaster in the making. It's an expression of the dysfunction in our system." Your remarks mirror similar comments made by deputy administrator Kathryn Sullivan to the Washington Post earlier this summer.

Perhaps you are unaware that the Republican-authored House FY 2011 bill recommended a higher level of funding for NOAA's satellite acquisition account than the Democrat-authored Senate bill despite the House having a lower allocation than the Senate. Further, for FY 2012, the House Commerce-Justice-Science Appropriations subcommittee recommended \$901 million, a nearly \$430 million increase—91%—above the FY 2011 level for JPSS. Despite having an allocation \$2.5 billion higher than the House, the Senate recommended an amount only slightly above the House recommendation, \$920 million. To my knowledge, you have never criticized Senate funding levels for JPSS. While the House did not provide the full \$1 billion requested, the House level is a significant amount of funding given these austere budget times when other programs in the Commerce-Justice-Science bill were significantly reduced or eliminated altogether.

Finally, I would call your attention to the fact that any gap in satellite data is not due to lack of funding, "Republican budget-cutting measures" or "the dysfunction in our system," but rather years of poor inter-agency management that resulted in the cancellation of the National Polar-orbiting Operational Environmental Satellite System (NPOESS) satellite program after being more than five years behind schedule, twice as expensive with fewer satellites and less capability. The caution shown by the Congress with regard to funding the successor program, JPSS, is fully justified in light of this record of waste and mismanagement. I have noted below portions of September, 2011 GAO testimony to the Congress on NPOESS mismanagement, from GAO-11-945T:

"When its primary contract was awarded in August 2002, NPOESS was estimated to cost about \$7 billion through 2026 and was considered critical to the United States' ability to maintain the continuity of data required for weather forecasting and global climate monitoring. However, in the years after the program was initiated, NPOESS encountered significant technical challenges in sensor development, program cost growth, and schedule delays. By November 2005, we estimated that the program's cost had grown to \$10 billion, and the schedule for the first launch was delayed by almost 2 years. These issues led to a 2006 restructuring of the program which reduced the program's functionality by decreasing the number of planned satellites, orbits, and instruments. The restructuring also led agency executives to decide to mitigate potential data gaps by using NPP as an operational satellite. Even after the restructuring, however, the program continued to encounter technical issues in developing two sensors, significant tri-agency management challenges, schedule delays, and further cost increases. Faced with costs that were expected to exceed \$14 billion and launch schedules that were delayed by over 5 years, in August 2009, the Executive Office of the President formed a task force, led by the Office of Science and Technology Policy, to investigate the management and acquisition options that would improve the NPOESS program. As a result of this review, the Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy announced in February 2010 that NOAA and DOD would no

longer jointly procure the NPOESS satellite system; instead, each agency would plan and acquire its own satellite system."

Your reported inaccurate and partisan comments are unhelpful. I urge you to publicly correct these inaccurate statements. I await your prompt response.

Best wishes,

Sincerely,

FRANK R. WOLF,

Chairman, Commerce-Justice-Science

Subcommittee, Appropriations Committee.

HONORING JULIE WATKINS FOR
TWENTY-THREE YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. NICK J. RAHALL II

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, it is always hard to say goodbye to a valued staff person, but today is especially difficult in wishing Julie Watkins a fond farewell as she begins her retirement.

Julie has served the people of West Virginia as a staff member in the U.S. Congress since 1989, almost 23 years.

Julie began her Congressional tenure working in the mailroom for West Virginia's beloved Senator Robert C. Byrd. She later moved to Senator Byrd's front office, where she was a Staff Assistant who proved her commitment daily to her job. Rising at 3:15 a.m., each morning, in order to drive from rural Virginia to be in the office by 5 a.m., Julie impressed Senator Byrd and everybody on staff with her diligence and hard work.

Julie later was promoted to Front Office Manager and then Office Manager, training every new Staff Assistant who came to work in Senator Byrd's front office, forty-eight in total, while she was in that position. After fifteen years, in 2005, she left the front office to try her hand at casework. Senator Byrd, who thought so very highly of Julie, was deeply reluctant to let her go—refusing to accept for the longest time that Julie was no longer looking after his front office—a position upon which he placed tremendous value. She had been, for so long, his warm, welcoming, efficient representative to so many West Virginians whenever they called for help or came to visit Capitol Hill.

When Senator Byrd passed away last year, I was fortunate that Julie agreed to come to work on the House Natural Resources Committee, on which I was Chairman. She worked in my Committee office, and later graciously moved to my personal office, once again resuming the vital duties of the front desk.

I cannot help but feel a little boastful in saying that I succeeded where Senator Byrd did not in convincing Julie to move back into the front office. I know, however, that Senator Byrd would be so proud to know that all of Julie's skill and experience were still being employed, at least for a little while longer, in serving the people of West Virginia.

Julie is one of those prized Congressional staffers who master their job. Many times they are not high profile positions, but they are essential to a smooth running office and to ensuring that our constituents are well and effectively served. Julie knows what so many of us forget or fail to understand: filling the copy

paper each morning, checking the fax machine so it works properly, knowing the right contacts in the Superintendent's office when something needs fixing—these sometimes seemingly little things are of big importance. Julie had a keen eye for catching those little things and always looked after them to ensure that everyone else could do their job better. She is ever dependable, ever reliable. When Julie gets an assignment, you know it will get done and get done right.

I know I speak on behalf of the entire Rahall staff, as well as the staffs of the Natural Resources and Transportation and Infrastructure Committees who have had the pleasure of working with her, when I say that Julie will be deeply missed. We wish her a most enjoyable retirement. We won't ever forget her and neither will scores of citizens who have benefited from her service to the Nation.

H.R. 674 AND H.R. 2576

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to vote in support of H.R. 674, which would repeal the onerous requirement that federal, state, and local government entities withhold three percent of payments to government contractors. Although never put into effect, the requirement would constitute a significant burden on all levels of government, which are presently sorely lacking in resources. Withholding three percent of payments was unsound policy when enacted by the Republican Congress in 2005, and I gladly will help my colleagues on the other side of the aisle correct their mistake.

I am less disposed to be helpful on H.R. 2576, a bill to adjust the definition of "modified adjusted gross income," MAGI, so that fewer Americans qualify for tax credits under the Affordable Care Act. This strikes me at best as a solution in search of a non-existent problem. To add insult to injury, H.R. 2576 will cause American families, seniors, and those with disabilities to pay more for their healthcare at a time when they can least afford it. I have spent my entire career fighting to ensure working American families have access to affordable, good-quality healthcare. Supporting H.R. 2576 would be in direct contravention of that goal, and I cannot in good conscience do so. I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on it.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to conclude by noting the rascality underlying the rule for H.R. 674 and H.R. 2576. It allows separate votes on both bills—one non-controversial and the other very controversial—and then requires they be merged for consideration by the Senate. I oppose this sort of legislating and believe each chamber should be allowed to work its will on separate items, rather than forced to accept bad policy in the guise of procedural tricks and faux compromise. This is skullduggery at its finest, Mr. Speaker, and an unnecessary affront to regular order, which your side so consistently claims to cherish.

TRIBUTE TO USS "CALIFORNIA"

HON. KEN CALVERT

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today, on behalf of the California Delegation, to honor and pay tribute to the USS *California* (SSN-781), a Virginia-class submarine and the first submarine to be named after the Golden State. On the occasion of the submarine's commissioning, we could not be more proud to have one of the world's most modern and sophisticated nuclear-powered attack submarines named for the state of California.

The contract to build her was awarded to Northrop Grumman Newport News (now Huntington Ingalls Industries Newport News Shipbuilding) in Newport News, Virginia, on August 14, 2003. Construction began in December 2006. *California's* keel was laid down on May 1, 2009. She was christened on November 6, 2010, sponsored by Donna Willard, wife of Admiral Robert F. Willard. The *California* was launched eight days later, on November 14, 2010. The commissioning has been scheduled for October 29, 2011 by the Secretary of the Navy. USS *California* will be homeported at Groton, Connecticut.

Designed to meet the Navy's requirements in a post-Cold War era, Virginia-class submarines use advanced technologies to increase firepower, maneuverability and stealth. Along with other Virginia-class submarines, the *California* is tailored to excel in a wide range of warfighting missions with several innovations that significantly enhance its warfighting capabilities, especially in the littoral environment. The ship has a fly-by-wire ship control system that provides improved shallow-water ship handling. The class has special features to support special operation forces and prolonged deployments. Advanced technology is employed to provide the ship's company enhanced situational awareness and is designed to remain state of the practice for its entire operational life through rapid introduction of new systems and payloads.

Previous ships bearing the USS *California* name have a long and storied history. The first USS *California*, a screw propelled frigate, was christened in 1869. In 1941, the USS *California* (BB-44) was the flagship of the U.S. Pacific fleet stationed in Pearl Harbor. She was badly damaged by Japanese torpedoes, and partially sunk. The three crewmen serving aboard the battleship that day were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for acts of bravery in saving the lives of their shipmates. A few months later, the *California* was salvaged and repaired, and served in the Pacific theater during the final two years of World War II. She was present at several crucial battles in the Pacific theater, including the Battle of Surigao Strait—the last naval engagement fought by opposing battleships.

The most recent USS *California* (CGN-26) was the lead ship of her class of nuclear powered guided missile cruisers and was also a vital part of the U.S. fleet from her launch in 1971 to her retirement in 1999. She was known as the "Golden Grizzly," in recognition of the grizzly bear on the California state flag. We are pleased that the USS *California* (SSN-781) will follow in the footsteps of previous ships that have served this great country so proudly.

California is a state with a long naval history and strong naval tradition. The entire California Delegation is proud to welcome the USS *California* as the eighth U.S. Navy ship named after our home state. We have no doubt that she, and her crew, will serve our country honorably.

The following are the names of the Members of the California Congressional Delegation in support of the USS *California*:

MIKE THOMPSON, WALLY HERGER, DANIEL LUNGREN, TOM MCCLINTOCK, DORIS MATSUI, GEORGE MILLER, JOHN GARAMENDI, JERRY MCNERNEY, JACKIE SPEIER, PETE STARK, ANNA ESHOO, MIKE HONDA, ZOE LOFGREN, SAM FARR, DENNIS CARDOZA, JEFF DENHAM, JIM COSTA, DEVIN NUNES, KEVIN MCCARTHY, LOIS CAPPES, ELTON GALLEGLY, HOWARD "BUCK" MCKEON, DAVID DREIER, BRAD SHERMAN, HOWARD BERMAN, ADAM SCHIFF, HENRY WAXMAN, XAVIER BECERRA, JUDY CHU, KAREN BASS, LUCILLE ROYBAL-ALLARD, MAXINE WATERS, JANICE HAHN, LAURA RICHARDSON, GRACE NAPOLITANO, LINDA SANCHEZ, EDWARD ROYCE, JERRY LEWIS, GARY MILLER, JOE BACA, KEN CALVERT, MARY BONO MACK, DANA ROHRBACHER, LORETTA SANCHEZ, JOHN CAMPBELL, DARRELL ISSA, BRIAN BILBRAY, BOB FILNER, DUNCAN HUNTER, and SUSAN DAVIS.

HONORING THE PALMYRA HIGH SCHOOL LADY PANTHERS

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating the Palmyra High School Lady Panthers softball team for winning the Class 2 Missouri State Championship on October 22, 2011.

The young women and their coaches should be commended for all their hard work throughout the regular season and bringing home the state softball championship to their school and community.

The Lady Panthers were hungry for a win and proudly demonstrated that competitive spirit by beating the undefeated Pleasant Hope High School Pirates softball team for the title. This is their fourth softball title in just six years.

I ask that you join me in recognizing the Palmyra Lady Panthers for a job well done.

HONORING TED WELCH

HON. MARSHA BLACKBURN

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, the true greatness of our state and country lies in the creativity, integrity, and passion of its people, and we are fortunate to be surrounded by mighty examples of dedication to leadership, service, and support of the arts. I rise today to honor Ted Welch as he receives the Applause Award. Given each year to those who devote their time, talents, and treasures to the performing arts and arts education in Middle Tennessee, Ted Welch joins Tim McGraw as this year's deserved recipients.